



THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY  
Windhoek, Namibia  
Public Affairs Office



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 5, 2014

CONTACT: Priscilla Hernandez  
Public Affairs Officer, Phone: 229-801

## **Oshekasheka Youth Use U.S.-funded Sports Facilities to Stop the Spread of AIDS**

The United States, through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) funded a soccer field, netball court, and basketball court for learners at Oshekasheka Combined School near Ondangwa. "Through the PEPFAR-funded program, youth have become empowered, gained confidence to make the right decisions about their health, and developed leadership skills," said U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Priscilla Hernandez.



Oshekasheka learners stay active to stay HIV-free.

Access to information about how to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS is vital information in the Oshakati area, where HIV rates soar at 22 percent, according to a Ministry of Health and Social Services Sentinel Survey in 2012. PEPFAR Coordinator Jennifer Nield said "Girls



in particular benefit from this PEPFAR sports program that encourages them to stay HIV-free and to help build an AIDS-Free Namibia."

PEPFAR builds netball court that helps promote healthy lifestyle choices.

Supported by two U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers based at Oshekasheka School and by a sports trainer employed by the school, the program advances priorities and needs identified by the Namibian government, and illustrates the shared responsibility among donors and implementing partners to make strategic investments to save lives. Evidence shows that sports-based HIV prevention interventions can significantly reduce stigma, increase HIV-related knowledge, and increase condom use.

The United States launched PEPFAR in Namibia in 2004 and since then, Namibia has received more than USD\$800 million in PEPFAR resources. The number of new infections has fallen 81 percent since 2004. PEPFAR is the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease internationally. Funding and programming is conducted through five U.S. government agencies: the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Peace Corps.

###

---

---